The home-school link is about more than just homework. Whilst homework does provide opportunities for interaction between the school and home, it is by no means the only way.

Here are our top five suggestions for home-school link activities that will get parents involved:

1. Get parents to give their feedback! When you send home projects for children to show their parents, include a feedback sheet for parents. You could ask some simple, guiding questions which will help them to appreciate what the child has achieved.

2. Get parents involved in homework! Give parents a task in the homework activity. Perhaps the child can ask their parents some simple, topic-based questions (in their native language). On the other end of the scale, you could send home simple games for the child and parent to play together to aid vocabulary learning. Another approach is for the parent to help test their child on vocabulary and sentence structures at home.

3. Get digital! Use social media and digital means to post simple tasks for parents to do at home. Communicating digitally will also mean they will be able to give you feedback more quickly and get in touch if they are finding something difficult and need a helping hand.

4. Prepare for the holidays! Send home activities and games children can do at home during holidays.

5. Use course materials! Check the course website to see what’s available in the parent section. Find all of Macmillan’s Young Learners courses at www.macmillanyounglearners.com/ourcourses

Remember not to expect too much from parents but to help them to be more involved in their child’s education.

Games and activities for parents to support their child’s learning at home.

It’s a good idea to provide a wordlist (ideally with the translated meanings) to parents that they can use for playing games with their child at home. Perhaps your course already has a word list you can use?

Word islands: Parent uses chalk to draw a series of large islands. Parent writes a word from vocabulary list in each island and instructions child to ‘step’, ‘jump’ or ‘hop’ to each word.

Sticky notes: Child puts sticky notes on objects around the home stating what they are in English to help them remember them.

Topic fun: Child and parent photograph topic-related objects and look up the English words for each object at home.

Sentence shuffle: Parent chooses a sentence from the coursebook making sure they are choosing key language for learning, usually in a highlighted box. Parent writes the sentence clearly on a piece of paper, cuts out each word and shuffles them. The child has to arrange the sentences in the correct order.
Games and activities using flashcards and wordcards

Parents and/or child write or draw a set of flashcards and/or word cards on target vocabulary. Create two of each card.

Snap: Shuffle and divide cards between the parent and the child. They take turns to lay down a card. When a matching word or image appears twice in a row, they shout ‘snap’ and take the cards from the middle. The player with the most cards wins.

Matching pairs: Shuffle and face all cards with the pictures or words face down. Each player takes it in turns to select two cards. If they match they can keep the cards. If they don’t match, they need to replace them. The player with the most pairs wins. Talk about the picture and pronounce the English words as they play.

What’s missing? Select some cards and put them face-up in front of the child. Child closes their eyes and the parent removes a card. Child must guess which is missing.

Visit https://www.macmillanyounglearners.com/resources for more ideas, activities and flashcards.

You can suggest parents reward their child with stars or stickers that they collect on a chart. This will encourage them to keep practising as they learn new vocabulary and grammar.

Macmillan courses and their Home-School Link

Macmillan’s courses have take-home or downloadable features such as CD-ROMs, DVD-ROMs and Practice Kits with interactive games, videos and songs that parents can practice with their child.

As well as digital, other home-school link course features include:

1. A take-home storybook in Dex
2. English World has Home–School Connect in ten different languages on their website
3. Tiger Time has a progress journal
4. Brainwave student website has a parent zone offering home study tips
5. Macmillan English has a resource page for parents
6. Story Central has a Reader that can be enjoyed at home

For more course information visit www.macmillanyounglearners.com/our-courses